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**Revitalization of Native American Economies a Priority  
for U. S. Department of Commerce**

*Office of Native American Entrepreneurship & Trade to be Created*

**Washington, DC** – Today, the U.S. Department of Commerce's Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) announced it will create a new office that will help Native American entrepreneurs and business owners raise revenues, generate jobs and achieve economic self-sufficiency.

"Increasing entrepreneurial activity and promoting trade and export opportunities on Indian land is a priority for the Department of Commerce and the Bush Administration," said MBDA National Director Ronald N. Langston. "The availability of abundant natural resources, a rich cultural legacy and a spirit of self-determination are economic assets. The Minority Business Development Agency welcomes the opportunity to assist tribal governments in the development of sustainable business growth strategies."

The Office of Native American Entrepreneurship & Trade will help Indian tribes forge business alliances with communities that surround Indian land and secure outside investment in economic activities on Indian lands. In addition, the Office will play a pivotal role in coordinating federal programs and services that:

- offer financial and technical assistance to increase and expand Native American owned businesses,
- stimulate demand for Indian goods and services through export and trade opportunities; and,
- increase travel and tourism programs to and near Indian lands.

The formation of the Office is being led by Kay Bills (Osage Nation), an accomplished computer and telecommunications business owner whose company grew to over \$13 million in a few short years. Most recently, Ms. Bills was the executive director of the Alaska 8(a) Association.

The first order of business will include eliciting input from MBDA's Native American Business Development Centers and conferring with representatives of national Native American organizations such as the National Congress of American Indians, National Indian Business Association and the Native American Business Alliance.

*For more information about MBDA, its programs and services, and the location of the Native American Business Development Centers, please visit [www.mbda.gov](http://www.mbda.gov).*

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